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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Communications Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250-1340 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2624

August 20, 1993

FARM INCOME AND AG POLICY FORUMS -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy says USDA will conduct three forums during September on farm income and agricultural policy. The sessions will be held September 8 at Arizona State University in Tempe, September 13 at Iowa State University in Ames, and September 30 at North Carolina A&T University in Greensboro. The forums will begin at 9:00 a.m. local time and end at 4:00 p.m. Eugene Moos, under secretary for international affairs and commodity programs, and a panel consisting of USDA agency officials will hear participant's comments. Individuals wanting to make a presentation at one of the three forums should contact the state ASCS office. (Arizona 602-640-5200, Iowa 515-254-1540, North Carolina 919-790-2957). Contact: Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623.

BEEF OUTLOOK -- A large number of calves is expected to be born in the second half of this year. This suggests the pace of expansion of cattle inventory will be increasing, and returns to cow-calf producers through the next two years will likely encourage continued herd expansion. Beef production is expected to rise about 3 percent to 23.8 billion pounds next year. Large supplies of beef and competing meat supplies are expected to reduce beef prices 2-4 percent next year, compared to a 3 percent increase this year. Beef consumption will increase about one pound per person. Contact: Ron Gustafson (202) 219-1286.

POULTRY FORECAST -- Expansion in the broiler industry continues. Broiler production next year is expected to reach 23 billion pounds, 5 percent above 1993 levels. Broiler prices will average near to just below those in 1993. Turkey production will expand 1-2 percent in 1994, the same rate as this year. Returns are expected to be near breakeven next year. Retail prices and per capita consumption of turkey in 1994 will likely be about the same as this year. Contact: Leland Southard (202) 219-0767.

PORK EXPANSION -- Pork production is expected to reach 17 billion pounds in 1994, 3 percent higher than this year, and the third continuous year of growth. Returns are expected to remain above cash costs. Barrow and gilt prices are expected to average slightly lower than in 1993. Retail prices are forecast to be about 2 percent higher. Per capita consumption could increase 2 percent next year. Contact: Shayle Shagam (202) 219-0767.

TWO-WEEK EXTENSION -- Producers will have an additional two weeks to decide whether to harvest their crop or to designate the land as 0/92 acreage. Declaring the land as 0/92 acreage makes the producer eligible to receive guaranteed deficiency payments on up to 92 percent of a farm's maximum payment acreage. The action by USDA gives producers, whose 1993 farm program crops suffered from severe adverse weather conditions, until August 31, to decide whether to harvest their crops or destroy them and take advantage of the 0/92 price support program. Previously, USDA had given producers until August 16 to revise acreage reports at ASCS offices. Contact: Robert Feist (202) 720-6789.

OPPORTUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE -- USDA has signed an agreement with New Mexico State University that will help provide qualified Hispanic candidates for employment in the food and agricultural sciences and by USDA. The joint project seeks new approaches to job development, cooperative education, curriculum and recruitment. USDA, in partnership with New Mexico State University and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, will establish and promote a pipeline of junior Hispanic professionals who are ready for careers in agriculture. Wardell Townsend, assistant secretary for administration and USDA's equal employment opportunity officer, says the agreement reinforces Secretary Mike Espy's commitment to work force diversity at USDA. **Contact: Jane Coulter (202) 720-7854.**

NEW USES -- Pulp from recycled paper or agricultural byproducts such as corn stalks can now be used to make silk-like rayon that is several times stronger than ordinary rayon. Li Fu Chen, a food scientist at Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, says the production is faster and cheaper than current methods. A company in Indiana plans to use the process in making high-quality home insulation from recycled newspaper. A Tennessee company hopes to use the technique to produce rayon yarn. If current research succeeds, the low-cost biodegradable rayon could hit the market within 5 years. **Contact: L.F. Chen (317) 494-2295.**

MAINTAINING BLOOD-SUGAR LEVELS -- USDA scientists are identifying foods that may help control diabetes in lieu of drugs. In studies some of the plants boosted insulin activity up to four times normal. The biggest increase was produced by the common weed loosestrife. Other plants were bearberry, hops, lavender, oregano, sage, dandelion, sweet bay and birch. These substances are generally prepared as teas or tinctures. Hops and lavender are food additives generally recognized as safe. Earlier studies showed spices, such as cinnamon and tumeric, to be effective in reducing glucose. The researchers hope to test the most effective compounds in humans. **Contact: Richard Anderson (301) 504-8091.**

ASIAN MARKETS EXPANDING -- Strong growth in Asian demand for major U.S. agricultural products is projected to continue through the 1990's, driven by the strong performance of Asia's varied economies. Demand by Japan and the industrializing East Asian markets, which account for most Asian farm imports, will continue to shift away from bulk commodities and toward processed products. Southeast and South Asia are expected to show the fastest growth in farm imports. Asia became the largest regional market for U.S. ag exports during the 1980's, and is expected to continue in that role during the remainder of the '90's. **Contact: Rip Landes (202) 219-0705.**

AVERAGE FARM? -- The saying goes that a rose is a rose is a rose. Studies show that the same can't be said of farms. Today's highly specialized farms produce different commodities in different regions with distinct management objectives. Midwestern cash grain farms, suburban part-time farms, Southern poultry producers, and Western vegetable growers may have little in common, and are very different subsectors of the agricultural industry. Each subsector has its own trends, some faring well while others are struggling, and each is affected differently by government farm policy. A review of U.S. farms in USDA's July 1993 issue of AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK, notes that the steady structural change and the increasing diversity of the farm sector means that descriptions of the "average farm" have less meaning than in the past. **Contact: David Harrington (202) 219-0520.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1889 -- Farmers and ranchers on Nebraska's high plains are major producers of corn and beef, and are no strangers to violent weather and unpredictable prices. In this edition **Brenda Curtis** travels to Nebraska for a look at high plains farming. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1371 -- Houseplant on vacation; don't spoil that baby!; back to school; food safety and higher education; nutrition on a limited budget. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1881 -- USDA News Highlights; 1994 feed grain comments sought; Nebraska agricultural outlook; winter forage strategies; preventing salmonella (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1634 -- Gene could detect cancer; protein for nursing mothers; early protection from heart disease; tracking nutrients in the body; "built-in" isotopes. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, August 31, weekly weather & crop outlook, ag prices; Wednesday, September 1, horticultural exports; Tuesday, September 7, farm production spending, ag income outlook. **These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359, COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on integrated crop management; **Will Pemble** reports on nursing mothers and protein; **Pat O'Leary** reviews naturally fertile fields; **Tyson Gair**, Mississippi State University, reports on national catfish month; and **Joe Courson**, University of Georgia, reports on irrigation equipment.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA chief meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on the weather and crop situation.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **DeBoria Janifer** reports on the U.S. rice crop.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update** with anchors **Eric Parsons** and **Lori Spiczka**. 4:30 of USDA farm program information in news desk format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

MAJOR PROBLEMS...have developed in the wheat crop, says **Mike Hergert** (KKXL, Grand Forks, ND). The wheat harvest is underway, but elevators are not accepting the product. Scab and vomitoxin are widespread. An FDA advisory limits amount of the toxin to 4 parts per million for feed, even less for human consumption. Mike hears it has been recommended that producers take a truckload for testing to get a more accurate reading of the condition, and to bin it separately until the issue is settled by the grain trade or crop insurance. Mike says the wet weather has also caused blight on potatoes that will reduce the crop by 30%, which raises the issue of how it will store this winter.

FIRST FROST...is the concern of our producers, says **Al Heinz** (KGLO, Mason City, IA). The normal arrival date is October 1. Al says if it holds off until October 30 they'll have a crop. Insects and some disease is also taking a toll. Al says the wetness is getting to be exasperating. A lot of people stay busy just mowing the lawn.

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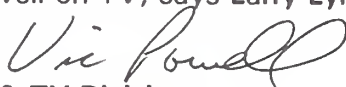
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use \$300



DRYNESS AND HEAT...have wiped out the crops of many producers in Georgia and South Carolina, says **Bill Craven** (WAGT, Augusta, GA). During the first half of August the temperature was over 100 degrees every day. Bill says there is no relief in the forecast.

FARM BROADCASTERS...serve their communities in many ways. A hay lift to northwest Illinois and into Iowa has been organized by **Gary Kinnett** (WIAI, Danville, IL) along with **John Everly** (KDTH, Dubuque, IA). To date, producers in Gary's area have donated 22,000 circular bales and 10,000 square bales. Iowa National Guard is donating use of semitrailers. The effort will continue into winter. Gary is also involved in a food drive for Feed the Children. His station helped to fill three semitrailers and three other large trucks by providing coverage of the effort at the Vermillion County Fair.

OPENING...exists for a broadcaster who knows ag issues, has the ability to generate stories and to tell them well on TV, says **Larry Lyle** (AgDay, Lafayette, IN). Contact him at 1-800-79AgDay.

VIC POWELL 
Chief, Radio & TV Division